

is simple and familiar enough to the average reader so that no lengthy word description is required.

Picture Story Within Text

The picture story within text actually presents two separate but related stories. One story is told in words, the other in photographs. Both are complete in themselves. The text may be used without the picture story, or the picture story maybe used without the text. Nevertheless, the combination of the two in a single layout makes the spread much more effective than either would be alone.

Single Picture Story

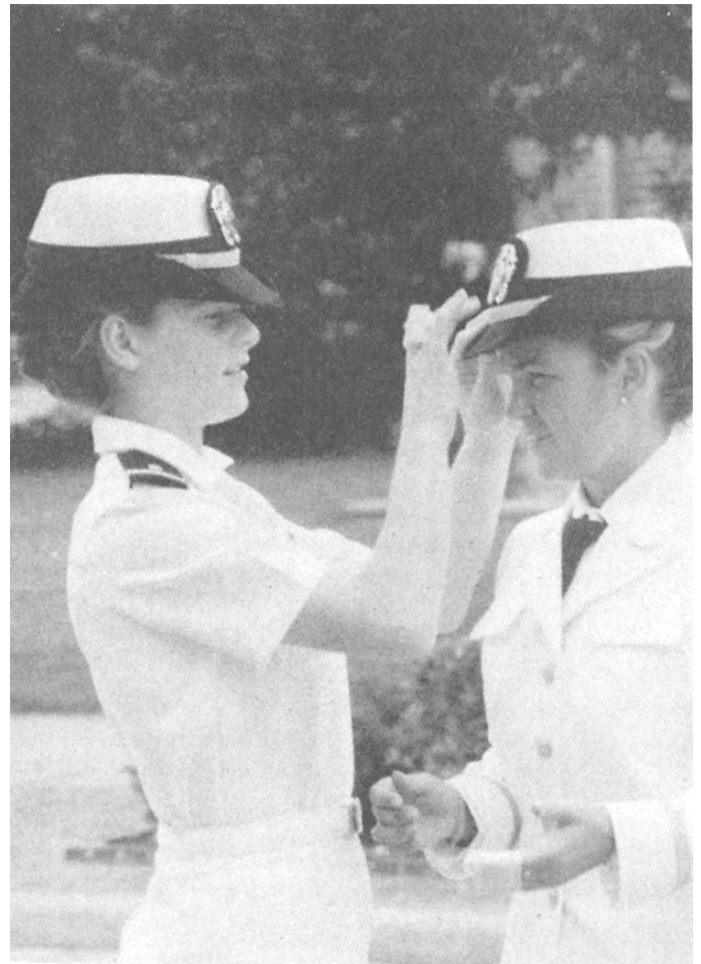
The single picture story is the most basic form of photojournalism. Single photographs, filled with impact, allow the viewer to “feel” the action and thus become involved with the subject.

The single picture story is similar to the lead photograph used in a longer picture story. It sums up the subject, evokes some emotion, or keys the action or the setting. The single picture, while strong, is also simple

Every photographic situation is different so there is no magic formula to tell you how to put impact or strength into a photograph to make it meaningful. Occasionally, the single meaningful picture is simply a matter of luck — being at the right place at the right time. More often, the photograph is the result of careful planning. In either case, the event is only captured because of the photographer’s timing (fig. 12-19). “Timing” means capturing the moment of greatest significance. There is no exact way of predicting that moment. To be successful, you must anticipate what is coming and be ready when it arrives.

Abstract Picture

You may be objective or subjective in your approach to a subject. This is considered an abstract picture approach. When you use the objective approach, try to record the subject as faithfully as possible, presenting the subject for the viewer’s own interpretation. When your approach is subjective, you engage your own feelings in your work. You approach the subject from the standpoint of your reactions. You want the viewer to



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Figure 12-19.—Photograph used in a single picture story.

feel as you felt when you recorded the subject. With this approach, the viewer is handed the reactions of the photographer and sees the subject as the photographer saw it.

It is the subjective approach that must be used to photograph the abstract — thoughts, emotions, and so forth. These are the subjects that primarily involve feelings rather than facts.

A photograph that captures an abstract idea or emotion conveys to viewers something with which they can identify. It stimulates their imagination and causes them to react emotionally.

To sense and capture abstract elements, you must have an understanding of what makes people react. Additionally, you must react yourself. You must see beauty and ugliness, feel love or hate, wonder at the



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Figure 12-20.—Abstract photograph.



PH2 Ron Garrison

Figure 12-21.—Informal portrait.

great and small, and sense and appreciate your own emotions (fig. 12-20).

To communicate the abstract in photographs, you must develop and use your inner sensitivity. The more it is used, the more you photograph will be a successful reflection of your experiences and emotional nature. Plus, the more these elements appear in your work, the more viewers become involved with the photographs.

Informal Portrait

Strong, expressive informal portraits are the result of a successful interaction between the photojournalist and the subject.

The most important element when shooting an informal portrait is for you to convey the character and personality of the subject honestly.

With few exceptions, the informal portrait shot cannot be in a studio where the subject is posing. In this situation the subject may appear very formal and withdrawn.

The informal portrait is best made when the subject is candid. This means photographing the subject in familiar

surroundings, such as his home or place of work. In these surroundings the subject's hands, gestures and facial expressions begin to convey character and personality.

The informal portrait is an excellent medium for relieving the boredom of the plastic formal portraits, the police mug shots and the "grip and grins" in Navy newspapers. If a person is of the caliber or character to be selected "Sailor of the Year," project that character and personality rather than the person's ability to shake hands.

Do not expect to get the best possible informal portraits by taking only two or three photographs. When you start, your subject will very likely be uneasy and tense. However, as you shoot, the subject will usually begin to relax.

The eyes (which must be in sharp focus) and the mouth are the important parts of the informal portrait. They are where the expressions, unique to each person, are revealed. Your job is to coax the expressions out of the subject. Usually, you can do this through a little conversation while you are shooting or by having the subject engaged in work or talking with another person. When the subject becomes involved and forgets the camera, the real expressions begin appearing (fig. 12-21).

There is no strong rule on how much of your subject should be included in your portrait. Ideally, an informal portrait will include everything that relates to the subject and nothing that does not. In some cases, this will mean including parts of the background because it relates to the subject. Or, it will mean throwing everything out of focus except the subject's face. A general rule is to keep the portrait simple and concentrate on the face.

Quite often it will be the available light that is the determining factor for adding depth and mood to the subject. Although formal portrait lighting should be avoided you should master its techniques. This will give you an understanding of the various effects of lighting and the changes they can make to the mood or shape of a subject's face.

The best lenses to use for informal portraits are medium telephotos between 85mm and 105mm. A medium telephoto will minimize the distortion you may get by working too closely with a normal lens, and it will allow you to work at a distance from your subjects that may make them less conscious of the camera.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Always keep in mind that the only reason for you to take a news photograph is to get it published. A print suitable for personal viewing may be wholly unsuitable for reproduction in a newspaper or magazine.

Most print media use the halftone reproduction process in which photographs are converted into a pattern of dots. These dots vary in size according to the intensity of the tone they will produce. In light areas, the dots are so small they are almost invisible. In dark areas, the dots are so close together they look like a solid mass of black. The amount of printing ink applied by the dots, of course, is in proportion to the light and shaded areas of the original print.

Because of this factor, photographs intended for reproduction must be clean and bright. The black must be strong enough to withstand a little "watering down." Important halftones in the photograph must be separated clearly, so they will not blend in with each other or become lost altogether in reproduction.

Therefore, a photograph can be good in content and composition, but not usable for reproduction because it is lacking in the following three required technical elements: focus, detail and contrast.

Focus

"Focus," as covered in Chapter 11, means that the subject must be distinct and the image sharply defined. Focus for reproduction must entail extreme sharpness since halftones lose some of their original sharpness in the reproduction process.

Detail

The halftone will not produce fine detail. Small detail in a newspaper is usually lost; therefore, detail must be overemphasized. The most effective way to emphasize detail is to move in close with the camera and concentrate on small areas. Any detail that is important to a photograph should be as large as possible and adequately lighted by natural light or the addition of fill-in reflectors or flash.

Contrast

Contrast is the difference between the light, dark and the intermediate tones of a photograph. A photograph with normal contrast will have an image with a full range of tones from white to black with all the intermediate grays. The image will be boldly defined but will not reproduce well. A photograph low in contrast or "flat" has many intermediate gray tones but lacks clear blacks and whites. It has no brilliance or snap, lacks strength and appears dull. It will reproduce in halftones as an indistinct or "muddy" blur. Only a photograph of normal contrast can be considered usable for halftone reproduction.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the techniques used to take sports photographs and record cutline information.

Sports photojournalists must know the sport they cover inside and out and demonstrate a keen ability to spotlight the key plays and players. While luck helps, more often, anticipation and a good working knowledge of the event are the foundation of a good sports photograph. Sports photography captures action; therefore, you must research the sport before game time in order to understand some of that action and to be prepared for it.

RESEARCHING THE SPORT

If you have never photographed a particular sport, prepare yourself by conducting research. Go to the library and read upon the sport, and if possible, watch a game or two (either on television or one played by local teams). Understanding basic strategies, rules and plays will help you capture the important moments of the game.

COVERAGE PLANNING

When you plan photographic coverage of sporting events, you should keep in mind the two main areas of action and people.

Action

Physical activity is the key ingredient of a sports photograph. Your photograph should not be static — sports action must take place. For instance, in football, the running back might break a tackle, the quarterback release a long pass and the linebacker make a sensational, back-breaking tackle. In baseball, the power forward might take the ball to the rim, the center slam-dunk his points home and the shooting guard drain a three-pointer. In softball/baseball, the extra hitter (designated hitter) could send an 0-2 pitch over the fence, the base runner tag up at second and go to third or the shortstop make a sensational diving stop in the hole.

Regardless of the sport, the point is that you must know and consider the sport you are photographing in order to key in on the action that sells that sport. You must anticipate the action and squeeze the shutter a split second before the receiver catches the football. By anticipating the play, you can capture the reception, rather than what happened immediately after the catch.

Shoot plenty of film when you cover sports. Often a shot you think will be good turns out to be unusable, while one you think you missed will run on the first page of the sports section.

People

Amateur Navy athletes are personalities within their communities. Your audience enjoys reading about them and seeing their photographs in your newspaper. Because the players are personalities, you should photograph them so they can be recognized in the picture.

The best sports photographs identify key players. “Identifying the players” means presenting the athlete from a profile to full-frontal view, if possible, to show the number on his uniform. A three-quarter to full-frontal view is best but is not always available.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR POPULAR SPORTS

Each sport has some peculiarities you must consider when you cover it. In the following text are some tips that will help you cover the “big three” sports — softball/baseball, football and basketball.

Softball/Baseball

If you make the proper arrangements with the base/station sports director, you can take photographs on the field in foul ground. However, as a courtesy, you should still ask the home plate umpire for permission.

Photograph left-handed hitters from the third-base side; conversely, right-handed hitters are best covered from the first-base side. You should shoot right-handed pitchers from the third-base side and left-handed pitchers from the first-base side. In softball, both left- and right-handed pitchers throw the ball while facing home plate, so you can shoot on the other side of the backstop or from directly behind home plate.

Home plate action is best shot from the third-base side of the field. Exercise caution, though. If you get in the way, you will probably be unwelcome at future games.

Get a variety of angles by moving around — go up in the stands, lie on the ground look over a shoulder or use any other creative angle that will not interfere with others.

Because you may need to photograph key plays on the opposite side of the field from where you are standing, be sure to use lenses with a long focal length

Football

If you are covering your station or base football team, stay on that team’s side of the field and follow the action from that location. (In an assignment where you are covering both teams equally, you may move to the other sideline at the appropriate time.) Move up and down the field with the action and photograph the players as they run, pass, kick tackle and score.

Football photography focuses on the offensive and defensive lines and the star players making or breaking

plays. The end zones provide you with an excellent opportunity to capture plays on both sides of the ball. Since scoring takes place in the end zones, a lot of heated action and exchanges take place inside the 10-yard-line. On the sidelines, bench shots sometimes dramatically tell the winning or losing tale — the frustration painted on a coach's face or the fatigue illustrated in a lineman's slumped body.

Use long, fast lenses to cover football. Additionally, you should also have a wide-angle or normal lens for sideline and goal-line shots.

Basketball

Basketball action normally takes place within 18 feet of the basket. Position yourself near your team's basket so you can capture plays in the "lane."

A 50mm lens is a safe bet for basketball photography. Longer lenses can make for dramatic photographs, but following the action and focusing becomes more difficult. However, you may get good shots by focusing a long lens on the net; then wait for a lay-up or rebound.

"Hoops" is perhaps the most difficult sport to photograph because of the lack of lighting, the fast action and the inability to always predict where the action will take place. To compensate, you should use a high-speed film or an electronic flash unit. Direct flash creates harsh shadows and could blind the athletes, so use a diffused flash.

RECORDING CUTLINE INFORMATION

Sometimes events in a game happen so quickly that you cannot stop to write down cutline information. In this case, it is sometimes wise to shoot the scoreboard, especially after a key play. Doing so can keep you on track if you cannot keep a running caption log to record the time remaining and score when the play occurred. Use time-outs, breaks between innings or other slack times to go back and write down your notes as described in Chapter 9.

FORWARDING PHOTOGRAPHS

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the process of handling photographs with historical or news value.

Whenever a photograph is considered to be of historical or news value, the Navy Imaging Command in Washington, D.C., wants to retain it in the Navy's permanent files (after you have made local use of it). Photographic documentation accomplished by designated photojournalists (NEC-8148) and other photography of significant news value should be forwarded to CHINFO.

Detailed instructions for handling photographs of this nature are covered in the *Navy Visual Information Management and Operations Manual*, OPNAVINST 5290.1 series.